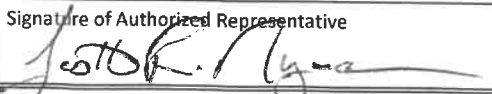


# BROADBAND EXPANSION GRANT APPLICATION

## For Fiscal Year 2022

Primary Applicant (Name and Address):  <b>Wittenberg Telephone Co./Wittenberg Wireless LLC dba          Cirrinity LLC          PO BOX 160          104 W Walker Street          Wittenberg, WI 54499</b>	Applications MUST be UPLOADED to ERF via the Commission's website, <a href="http://psc.wi.gov/apps35/ERF_upload/content/mymenu.aspx">http://psc.wi.gov/apps35/ERF_upload/content/mymenu.aspx</a> . Refer to section 2.3 for detailed instructions.  Applications are due and MUST be uploaded to ERF no later than: <b>March 17, 2022</b> at 4:00pm (16:00) Central Time. <b>Late applications will not be accepted.</b>	
Contact for further information: <a href="mailto:PSCStatebroadbandoffice@wisconsin.gov">PSCStatebroadbandoffice@wisconsin.gov</a>		
Date: December 1, 2021		
<p>The Public Service Commission of Wisconsin is seeking applications for Broadband Expansion Grants. The Commission may award one or more grants during Fiscal Year 2022 to public and private entities that meet the eligibility requirements set forth in Wis. Stat. § 196.504. This grant round will be funded with bond proceeds authorized by the Wisconsin Building Commission pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 13.48(30). As such, successful applicants are subject to the requirements of Wis. Stat. § 13.48(30). Successful applicants will demonstrate a clear and achievable plan to improve broadband communications services in one or more underserved areas in the State.</p>		
<p><b>Applicant Certification:</b> In signing this application, the undersigned verifies under penalty of perjury that the Applicant and its employees and agents have not, either directly or indirectly, entered into any agreement or participated in any collusion or otherwise taken any action in restraint of free competition with respect to this application; that no attempt has been made to induce any other person or firm to submit or not to submit an application; that this application has been independently arrived at without collusion with any other proposer, competitor or potential competitor; that this application has not been knowingly disclosed prior to the opening of applications to any other applicant or competitor; that all of the responses and representations of Applicant in this application are true and correct to the best of the undersigned's knowledge, information, and belief; and that Applicant agrees to, accepts, and will comply with all of the terms and conditions respecting this application and any award of a broadband expansion grant as may be established in a grant award Agreement.</p>		
Name of Authorized Representative (Type or Print)  Scott Nyman	Title  CEO/General Manager	Phone (715)253-2114
Signature of Authorized Representative 	Date 3/16/22	

## SUMMARY OF GRANT APPLICATION

Primary Applicant Name <b>Wittenberg Telephone Co./Wittenberg Wireless LLC dba Cirrinity LLC</b>	Amount of Broadband Grant Request (round to nearest dollar) <b>\$918,225</b>
Federal Employer Identification No. <b>39-0718390</b>	Amount of Matching Funds Pledged (round to nearest dollar) <b>\$751,275</b>
Contact Name and Title  <b>Scott Nyman, CEO/General Manager</b>	Total Cost of Proposed Project (round to nearest dollar) <b>\$1,669,500</b>
Telephone Number <b>(715)253-2114</b>	Project Name <b>Marathon County Town of Reid FTTH Project</b>
E-mail Address(es) <a href="mailto:snyman@cirrinity.net">snyman@cirrinity.net</a>	Type of Proposed Broadband Service (FTTH, Cable, DSL, etc.)  <b>FTTH</b>
Grant Manager, if different than Primary Applicant	Type of Proposed Project (Last-mile, Middle-Mile, backbone, other)  <b>Last-mile, Backbone</b>
Grant Manager Contact Name	Grant Manager Email Address and Telephone Number
If the application proposes a public-private partnership, list the names, addresses, and FEINs of the partner companies or organizations <b>Marathon County Board of Supervisors, 500 Forest Street, Wausau, WI 54403 FEIN ES43306</b> <b>Town of Reid, 7089 Plover River Road, Hatley, WI 54440,</b>	
Brief Project Description (2 sentences) <b>Complete building FTTH to residents in the Town of Reid past 368 homes and businesses. This project will build off of our existing grants from previous rounds which has sparked an additional investment from Cirrinity and expanded our partnership with Marathon County as well as the Town of Reid.</b>	
Maximum Proposed Download Transmission Speed <b>10 Gigabit</b>	Maximum Proposed Upload Transmission Speed <b>10 Gigabit</b>
Minimum Proposed Download Speed to Customer Location <b>100M</b>	Minimum Proposed Upload Transmission Speed to Customer Location <b>100M</b>
County or Counties served by this project <b>Marathon County</b>	Community or Communities served by this project <b>Town of Reid</b>

List of the broadband service providers, if any, currently serving the area the applicant proposes to serve <b>Frontier North, Inc.</b> <b>Cirrinity/Wittenberg Telephone Company</b>	
Does proposed project serve an <u>unserved</u> area of the State, as defined in <a href="#">Section 1.4</a> of the application instruction? (yes/no)  <b>YES</b>	Is the Applicant certified as a Broadband Forward! Community or Telecommuter Forward! Community, or does the grant project propose to serve a Broadband Forward! Community or Telecommuter Forward! Community? (yes/no) <b>YES, Telecommuter Forward</b>
For last mile projects or component the expected number of Business Locations that will have access to the improved broadband service (i.e., total business locations passed or with new service access). <b>15</b>	For last mile projects or components the expected number of Residential Locations that will have access to the improved broadband service (i.e., total residential locations passed or with new service access). <b>363</b>
Of the improved business locations, how many locations are <i>unserved</i> ?  <b>15</b>	Of the improved residential locations, how many are <i>unserved</i> ?  <b>363</b>
For providers that are eligible telecommunications carriers will the proposed broadband service be available to Lifeline customers? (yes/no)  <b>Yes</b>	Are there any programs available for low-income households to access low-cost service or discounts? (yes/no)  <b>Yes ACP (Affordable Connectivity Program)</b>
Is the internet service provider currently participating in the Emergency Broadband Benefit Program? (yes/no) <b>Now ACP - Yes</b>	Is the internet service provider currently participating in the Department of Public Instruction and CESA purchasing's Digital Learning Bridge? (yes/no) <b>No</b>
Did the internet service provider participate in the Public Service Commission's voluntary Broadband Coverage Data Collection in 2021? (yes/no) <b>Yes</b>	

## FY22 Broadband Expansion Grant Application

### Budget & Income Summary



Please complete this form using Microsoft Excel. A PDF copy must be attached to your application as page four. In addition, this form must also be uploaded to ERF in Excel format.

### Grant Summary

<b>Grant Applicant:</b>	<b>Project:</b>
Wittenberg Telephone Co./Wittenberg Wireless DBA Cirrinity LLC	Marathon County Town of Reid FTTH Project

### Budget

Line:	Description / Category:	Grant Funds:	Match:	Total:
1	Contractual, Consultant Fees	\$ 661,122.00	\$ 540,918.00	\$ 1,202,040.00
2	Equipment	\$ 238,738.50	\$ 195,331.50	\$ 434,070.00
3	Supplies			\$ -
4	Labor (Salary, Fringe)	\$ 18,364.50	\$ 15,025.50	\$ 33,390.00
5	Permitting, Licensing Fees			\$ -
6	Travel			\$ -
7	Other			\$ -
<b>Total:</b>		<b>\$ 918,225.00</b>	<b>\$ 751,275.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,669,500.00</b>
45.0% match requested				

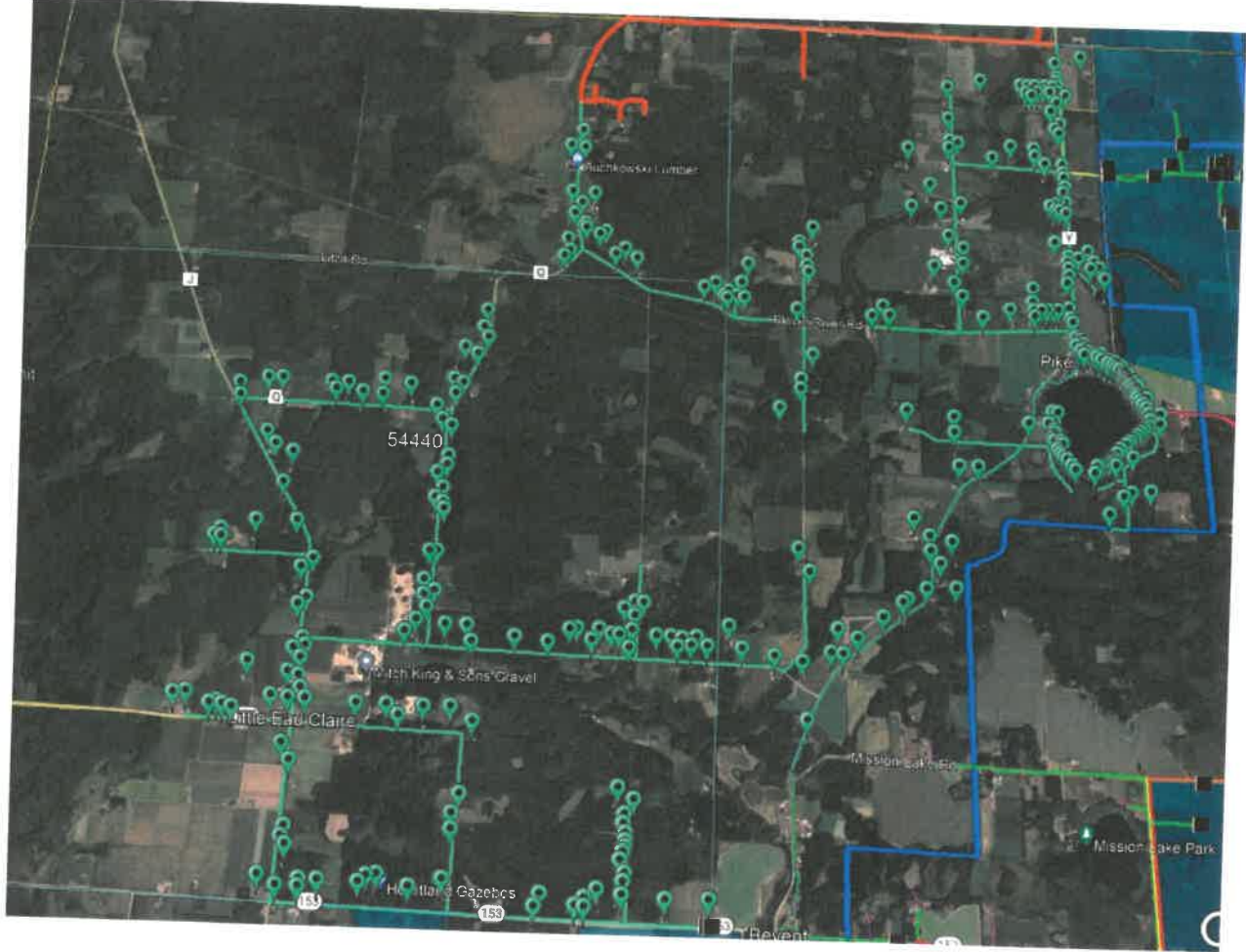
### Pledged Contributions

#:	Entity:	Entity Type:	Pledge Type:	Pledge:
1	Marathon County	Partner	Cash	\$ 70,000.00
2	Cirrinity	Applicant	Cash	\$ 681,275.00
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
<b>Total:</b>				<b>\$ 751,275.00</b>

## Maps

**Description:** The Town of Reid is in this photo, and you will see that (GREEN) lines are the proposed Fiber routes and (GREEN) balloons are homes and businesses passed for this application. The other colored lines are our previous fiber routes except the Blue line shows our Wittenberg Telephone Company ILEC Exchange Boundary line.

### Town of Reid



## 1.0 Executive Summary of the Application

Cirrinity proposes a fully Fiber-to-the-Home (FTTH) deployment in partnership with Marathon County and the Town of Reid to build Gigabit capable reliable and affordable Broadband to these 368 rural homes and businesses

Marathon County and Wittenberg Wireless has created a partnership starting in 2019 and have worked as a team together to close the digital divide and provide the vital Broadband that is needed to the rural community areas. Through the partnerships and with the assistance of Broadband Expansion Grants 25 miles of Buried FTTH construction has been completed in the past year providing the valuable High-Speed affordable Broadband desired to nearly 1500 Marathon County Residents. The proposed path of Fiber optic which will include Gigabit Speed Broadband for all homes and businesses passed, starts at the East near Wittenberg Telephone Company's exchange boundary and continues to all homes and businesses West throughout the Town of Reid. The project would meet up with a previously awarded grant from the PSC in the North side of the Town of Reid near the Joe's Road Subdivision off of County Road Q. The previous awarded grants in this area have shown fantastic take rates of 60-70% and we expect the same in the new area to complete this project for these rural residents. The town of Bevent where Cirrinity has FTTH today would be the South boundary and also therefore provide a redundant path to this area increasing the availability of services and eliminate downtime. Recent changes to the use of ARPA funds has made the Town of Reid pull its financial backing of this application to use for needed roads projects.

The majority area of this proposal for this grant round is described as "unserved/underserved" in that there are no broadband service offerings providing a speed of 25/3 as we have confirmed in our current FTTH buildout that this project will expand on. Consumers have reported long wait times for repairs and in some instances new customers have been unable to obtain service from the incumbent provider. Taking into account the outdated copper last mile deployment strategies by the incumbent telephone provider, expansion of true 100M/100M broadband services in these areas is not anticipated or expected. Providers in this area include landline: Frontier North Inc. and Wireless: US Cellular other major mobile carriers.

**Matching contributions of \$751,275 (45%) toward this project's \$1,669,500 cost will be provided by Cirrinity LLC and Marathon County. These contributions, as always, are substantial, and arise from the understanding that these areas are severely underserved. The incumbent voice provider has not provided a fiber-based broadband solution to the area.**



### **3.2 Mandatory Application Requirements**

#### **3.2.1 Applicant identification and contact information**

- a. *The name of the entity applying for the grant, and the mailing address, telephone number and e-mail address of one or more contact persons representing the applicant.*

Name of Entity: Wittenberg Telephone Company, Inc/Wittenberg Wireless LLC dba Cirrinity LLC

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 160, 104 W. Walker Street, Wittenberg, WI 54499-0160

Telephone Number: 715-253-2111

Contact: Scott Nyman, General Manager [snyman@cirrinity.net](mailto:snyman@cirrinity.net)

- b. *If the application proposes a public-private partnership, the identity and contact information for all application partners.*

Recognizing distinct local and countywide benefits of this application, the Town of Reid Board has committed \$ in ARPA matching funds and Marathon County has determined to continue to support us in our endeavors by working with Towns in the area as well as working in-kind in our future plans of expansion in the area.

#### **Public-Private Partnerships**

Name of Entity: Marathon County  
Mailing Address: 500 Forest Street, Wausau, WI 54403  
Telephone Number: (715)261-1404  
Contact: Noor Ali Hassan

Name of Entity: Town of Reid  
Mailing Address: 215764 County Road Y, Hatley, WI 54440  
Telephone Number: (715)446-3767  
Contact: Kittie Milanowski– Clerk

- c. *The application must show that the applicant is an organization, a telecommunications utility, or a city, village, town, or county that has established a legal partnership or joint venture arrangement with an otherwise qualified organization or telecommunications utility, and as such meets the eligibility requirements set forth in Wis. Stat. § 196.504(1).*

Incumbent Local Exchange Carrier Wittenberg Telephone Company Inc. is certified to provide telecommunications service in the State of Wisconsin pursuant to Section 196.50(2)(b) of the Wisconsin State Statute. Wittenberg Telephone Company (PSCW Utility #6750) currently serves the Wittenberg and Elderon exchanges of Wisconsin in study area #330973.

Wittenberg Wireless LLC now Cirrinity LLC (PSCW Utility #6752), a wholly owned subsidiary of Wittenberg Telephone Company, has been designated an Alternate Exchange Carrier by the

Commission. Cirrinity LLC has an active Interconnection Agreement with Frontier North, Inc. that was approved by the PSCW in its Docket 5-TI-2357

### **3.2.2 Description of the Project**

*a. A static map and description of the area of the State that will be affected by the proposed project.*

1. A map file has been emailed to [pscbroadbanddata@wisconsin.gov](mailto:pscbroadbanddata@wisconsin.gov) to show the affected areas of the project immediately following submission of this application to the ERF.
2. The proposed service area includes the entire Southern Town of Reid expanding off of previous PSC Broadband Expansion Grant. The maps on page 5 show the fiber backbone routes as well as the last mile construction to over 368 homes and businesses.

The fiber backbone flows throughout this portion of the County to reach more homes, farms and businesses. Fiber pedestals will be constructed at intervals for drops and also to facilitate future expansion. As provided in the Executive Summary on page 6 this area has a history of being underserved.

*c. An explanation of how the proposed project will increase broadband access.*

- a) Potential and Expected Number of households served including number of unserved and underserved locations. **353 residents all underserved**
- b) Potential and expected number of businesses served. **15 Businesses all underserved**
- c) Estimated download and upload speed of the broadband service packages available for purchase:
  - 100M/100M symmetrical unlimited \$59.99 per month
  - 500M/500M symmetrical unlimited \$99.99 per month
  - 1 Gigabit/1 Gigabit symmetrical unlimited \$139.99 per month
  - Higher speeds available on request up to 10 Gigabit

*d. A statement whether the proposed project is targeting the “last mile,” “middle mile,” or backbone portion of the broadband infrastructure.*

- a) The proposed project includes backbone, distribution and last mile fiber facilities. The project is an extension of Cirrinity’s existing fiber network, with dedicated backbone, distribution, feeder and drop fiber to premises in the service area.
- b) No middle mile infrastructure costs or construction are included in this grant application.
- c) Cirrinity LLC currently maintains sufficient middle mile and backhaul facilities, and capacity, on its existing backbone ring network to deliver high-speed broadband services to all proposed and future last mile subscribers in the area.



- e. *A description of the broadband service to be provided, including estimated download and upload speeds, whether the speed is dedicated or shared bandwidth, and the technology that will be used.*
1. In this Application, Cirrinity will provide its high-speed wireline broadband service using a FTTH network design. This will be an extension of the fiber network currently in place and used in the Wittenberg Telephone service territory. The same technology will be used to provide the longest-lived service infrastructure to new customers in this application
  2. This will also be an extension of the fiber network currently in place and used in the Wittenberg Telephone service territory. The same successful wireless technology as has been implemented elsewhere by the company to provide the longest-lived service infrastructure to new customers in this application
  3. This fiber network will be connected to the existing fiber network and broadband electronics used to provide broadband services in the Wittenberg Telephone service territory
  4. Pricing of FTTH broadband in the proposed service area will be as follows: --and have not changed since 2021. Don't expect to raise.  
100M/100M dedicated unlimited \$59.99  
500M/500M dedicated unlimited \$99.99  
1 Gigabit/1 Gigabit dedicated unlimited \$139.99
  5. Much faster service speeds will be immediately available, and priced ICB for residential and business customers with special needs
  6. Fully-featured VoIP voice services will be available at subscribers' request. Subscribers will not be required to take voice services in the proposed service area. Cirrinity will provide video services via a partnership.
- d. *A schedule by which the applicant intends to complete the components of the proposed project.*

If the grant application for the project is approved by the end of July 2022 Cirrinity will follow the deployment schedule below, based on similar projects we have completed:

August 2022 – March 2023	Order and stage equipment
May – September 2023	Bury new backbone and last mile fiber optic cable
October – December 2023	Install electronics at FTTH subscriber locations and turning up all customer services

NOTE: This schedule is subject to no unforeseen circumstances in the supply chain as we are currently experiencing some delays of equipment and materials needed to complete these in-depth future proof FTTH projects.

### 3.2.3 *Itemized Budget*

- *In addition to the Summary of Project Budget that is included as page 3, applicants should include a price list or quote for any equipment the applicant intends to purchase, including capital expenditures. The application should also indicate whether any facilities involved would be owned, rented, or leased.*

All construction and installation costs will be managed by Cirrinity. The company and will utilize internal employees and trusted third party contractors the company has successfully used in similar fiber and wireless builds.

All fiber and network equipment will be owned by Cirrinity LLC., a wholly owned subsidiary of Wittenberg Telephone Company.

- *The application must show that the grant, if awarded, will not subsidize the expenses of a telecommunications provider or the monthly bills of telecommunications customers. For purposes of this grant program, subsidize means a contribution to the operating costs, including profit, of the telecommunications provider.*

The grant funds requested in this Application will only be used for authorized purposes. The applicant will not subsidize its ongoing expenses or the monthly bills of telecommunications customers. It is understood that for purposes of this grant program, subsidy means a contribution to the recurring service charges, operating costs, including profit, of the telecommunications provider.

- *The application must show that the grant funds requested will be used for the sole purpose of constructing broadband infrastructure in the underserved areas covered by the application. Construction of broadband infrastructure may include any of the following:*
- *Project planning that takes place during the performance period*

All project planning activities will be paid for by Cirrinity.

- *Obtaining Construction Permits*

All Permits will be obtained by Cirrinity and its sub-contractors while also working with the County and Towns on an in-kind basis.

- *Construction of facilities, including construction of both "middle mile" and "last mile" infrastructure.*

All construction of last mile infrastructure will be paid for by Cirrinity. The application does not include any expenditure for middle-mile facilities. All middle-mile expenditures are incurred and managed by Cirrinity, as part of its scalable infrastructure.

- *Installation and testing of the broadband service*

All installation and testing activities will be paid for by Cirrinity.

Cirrinity affirmatively states all grant funds requested in this Application will be used for the sole purpose of constructing broadband infrastructure in the underserved areas covered by this Application. The partners' self-funded contributions to this project's costs will be 55.0% of construction and testing costs, with any over-runs covered by Cirrinity.

### 3.2.4 Priority factors supporting the application

**a. Matching Funds**

Can be found on the Funding Statement on Page 4

**b. Public-private partnerships.** *If the public-private partnership is memorialized in a joint venture agreement or other writing, provide a copy of that agreement. If the partnership has not been reduced to a written agreement, provide a short description of the management role, financial commitment, or other contribution to the project for each participating partner.*

Since 2019 Cirrinity has been working with Marathon County and engaged in activities to expand Broadband throughout the County. Our partnership has expanded to all the Towns in the area and support of the Broadband Task Force. The Town of Reid has been actively working with us since 2019 on getting viable broadband to its residents. Cirrinity and Marathon County have partnered on several previous Grants with the Broadband expansion program and have been very successful in completing these projects by working together on expedited permitting and funding. Most recently we were awarded a Grant in the Fall 2021 ARPA Grant Round to complete the build to all residents and business to the Town of Norrie and will have this project completed in the summer of 2022.

The Town of Reid and Marathon County has agreed to the following to assist:

1. Provide in-kind assistance to the Project which may be in the form of waived fees and expenses for obtaining permits or permissions required;
2. Grant permission on and across Town and County property, to engage in activities to construct the Project in compliance with all existing rules and regulations;
3. Provide community education and outreach regarding the expansion of broadband access to residences and businesses within the scope of the Project; and recognizing that the broadband expansion project is a priority and is consistent with any internal planning documents

**c. Existing broadband service.** *A list of the broadband service providers, if any, currently serving the area the applicant proposes to serve.*

- *The degree to which the proposed project avoids duplicating existing broadband infrastructure.*

Cirrinity's proposed project does not duplicate existing broadband infrastructure. No carrier today in the proposed project area is capable of offering a consistently reliable and available broadband service as defined by the state's and the FCC's 25/3 Mbps standard.

- *Provide a list of all landline broadband service providers (DSL, cable or fiber to the home) and fixed wireless broadband service providers that overlap the footprint of the proposed broadband project.*

The incumbent provider, Frontier North makes available a copper DSL service described with speeds of up to 6/1 Mbps in most of the proposed grant area, with no known plans to make a significant investment in achieving faster speeds. A few Frontier areas, abutting are shown on the state's Broadband Map as offering speeds up to 6/1 Mbps, and some census blocks are shown either with no speed or as "unserved". No other landline providers in the area are known.

US Cellular and other major mobile providers show speeds of 5-20 Mbps subject to tree lines and weather, but these are not seen by the provider as viable services as older equipment becomes obsolete.

- *If known, provide an estimate of the customers within the proposed footprint that are served by competing landline and fixed wireless broadband service providers, and the download/upload speeds offered by those competing service providers.*

In addition to speeds mentioned directly above, letters from businesses and home owners in the proposed project area offer a resounding set of comments that incumbent landline speeds either fall below advertised levels and/or are not sufficient for current needs, much less those of the coming 2 years or more.

- *Provide a list of mobile wireless broadband service providers that overlap the footprint of the proposed project.*

Mobile/cellular broadband service is advertised by AT&T, T-Mobile, US Cellular, and CellCom. Sprint advertises coverage of approximately a third of the proposed area. None provide particular advertised data speeds as of early March 2022. Letters of support at the end of this application includes actual customer feedback that such speeds are not truly available in these areas, and that the incumbent was resistant to expanding their infrastructure to do so. We also have shown high 60-70% or higher take rates in areas we have already built FTTH in this area and expect the same for this project.

- d. ***Project Impact*** *A description of the geographic area and the population, both in terms of absolute numbers and likely users, which will be served by the proposed project. Indicate the number of anticipated residential and business customers in the project area, if known. Explain the speed and quality of internet service that will be available. Include information about the range of packages available for purchase. Provide details on any low-income access programs and steps the project will take to support adoption.*

The geographic area served by the project include the Towns of Reid in rural Marathon Count. Cirrinity has identified approximately 368 current household units of which 15 are known to be business or work from home. Based on previous fiber expansions, 75% of these are likely to take service in the first two years, with a long-term target of 90%. The network has been engineered to accommodate a 100% take rate, plus growth due to the economic impact of this build.

Cirrinity's fiber to the home (FTTH) deployment, the area will benefit the areas by providing:

- The first 25/3 and faster FTTH broadband to almost all current and future Community residences and businesses, capable of accommodating continual speed increases past GigE speeds for a generation to have data connectivity and video entertainment,
- Enable both residential and home business connectivity to high-speed Internet services. Increase the productivity of home agricultural businesses.
- Raise the value of local housing and the area in general due to FTTH broadband availability.

Primary benefits of this project include:

1. Delivering the area's only fiber-to-the-home (FTTH), schools and business high speed broadband service. The provision of up to gigabit and faster connectivity will give residents world class access to education, healthcare, Work at Home applications and video services, not previously available in this area. Businesses coming to these communities will now be on an equal footing with their urban counterparts, attracting capital and workers not now in the area. It is expected that new housing and jobs will be stimulated by the existing of fiber-based broadband services.
2. High speed broadband service will allow many residents to work at home as employers allow. This broadband project will provide the facility-based infrastructure to expand to new housing developments as an amenity raising housing value as a destination.
3. Tourism. The project area is a large tourism destination drawing people from all over the Midwest. Tourism includes shopping and dining along the many Wisconsin natural treasures, blossoming stores, lodges, casual restaurants, services and gas stations. There are many places for fishing, hiking, and site seeing. Increased tourism is this area's principal engine for economic development as increased job opportunities and the ability to spend time as they move through the Mountain Bay trails, enjoying locally available products and services from the local business community raise its visibility across the region.
4. Access to emergency services. High-speed fiber-based broadband services enable rural practitioners in the medical facilities of the area to transmit medical imagery and data to

clinics and healthcare providers in larger population centers. Along with access to broadband, this is cited as an important concern of visitors and seasonal residents—apart from the value it confers to permanent residents and small businesses in the area. The local fire station, roads department, social centers, high school, County offices, and Emergency Services approached Cirrinity for fiber connectivity necessary to maintain and grow their roles and we delivered.

5. Cirrinity will now be able to meet past requests for fiber that will create more opportunities for residents, visitors and travelers to this 4-season leisure and tourism area to include the relocation of Tele-workers to a slice of the Northwoods.
  6. Home WIFI networks will expand the range of cellular phones, access to emergency services and provide connectivity in homes choosing not to use landline telephone services.
  - **Cirrinity is a participant in the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) formerly EBB Emergency Broadband Benefit and all residents affected by this project would be able to apply to qualify for the benefit. Cirrinity will communicate this to all customers at the time of sign up as well as proactively via Social Media marketing and regular Bill messages after a customer has service.**
- e. ***Scalability.*** *A description of how the proposed project could expand or improve the broadband service it delivers, while maintaining the quality of its broadband service. This description should include specific projected increases in the following parameters that are known at the time of the application:*
- *The number of users.*
  - *The number of network nodes.*
  - *The number of services provided.*
  - *The geographic area served by the project.*

*This description may also include a discussion of possible growth potential that is outside the commitment the applicant is making as part of its application.*

This project is intended to grow to ultimately accommodate all current estimated at 368 and all future residential and businesses in the FTTH target area. Our existing Nodes will be able to handle all of the projects expected impact as well as future growth. First with high-speed Broadband, video, and all voice service features currently available to the applicant's existing subscribers. This project initially deploys ultrafast broadband services over fiber facilities suitable for broadband at practically unlimited speeds, well in excess of the definition of broadband services as 25/3 Mbps. Initial speeds of up to 1 Gbps will be available to every fiber-based subscriber.

Cirrinity has seen its past expansions the Town of Reid act as engines to bring jobs and residential subscribers to new areas based upon the availability of fiber-based broadband services. The entire area is also ripe for economic expansion arising from year-around



tourism. Cirrinity will continue to work with Marathon County long after this project, and all points in between to continue to grow in this high-need area.

f. **Economic development.** *A description of how the proposed project will promote job growth or retention, expand the property tax base or improve the overall economic vitality of the municipality or region. This description may be supplemented with a letter from one or more persons discussing the potential economic impact the project could have for that individual or business. In scoring this element, the following factors will be taken into account:*

- *A discussion of potential economic impact the project could have for an individual business located in the project area.*
- *An explanation of how an improved download and upload transmission speed could better support a specific business in the project area.*
- *An explanation of the likely impact improved broadband service could have on residential property values, supported by local sales data if available.*
- *A demonstration of how improved broadband service to a residential portion of the project could benefit a telecommuting population.*
- *A demonstration of how the speeds and service being offered by the project fits with current and future economic needs of the community and local businesses*

The Marathon County Development Corporation (MCDEVCO) and board of Marathon County have been discussing strategies to expand broadband in the County for several years. These discussions have been rooted in a deep understanding that strong broadband availability is a vital economic factor in the new growth of communities throughout the entire County landscape. Expanding broadband beyond the County's urban areas to keep and grow jobs in the rural towns is a key factor to help keep Wisconsin Businesses strong with local workers from the Wausau area that have the need to be able to telework. Due to its proximity to the urban area of Wausau, the value of homes in this area will benefit as homeowners look to relocate to the country to work from home or take the short drive in to the city as needed.

Better connectivity for municipal, governmental and commercial services all stimulates growth, customer bases and employment in the area.

- o Town of Reid Town Hall
- o A local Lumber Yard

g. **Effect upon broadband service to adjacent areas.** *A description of whether the proposed project will or will not impair the ability of a broadband service provider or competing broadband service provider to extend broadband service to areas adjacent to the proposed project area.*

The incumbent does not maintain fiber nodes within the proposed project areas. Services being proposed will therefore not impact the incumbent's ability to serve in areas adjacent to the proposed project areas. If subscribers in adjacent areas are not met with

updated infrastructure and capabilities from their incumbent provider, using infrastructure in the adjacent areas, residents of adjacent areas may eventually petition Cirrinity to further expand its FTTH broadband network. The incumbent has made no attempts to reassure subscribers of eventual CAF II construction requirements arguably do not require fiber infrastructure, and can be satisfied by 10/1 Mbps service availability at any point in the coming five years. The incumbent can look statewide to satisfy federal requirements. This application does not have any material impact on the incumbent's ability to meet its CAF II requirements.

### ***3.2.5 Other Information Supporting the Application.***

*A description of applicant's history or experience constructing broadband communications facilities in the state and elsewhere*

- *If applicable, an applicant must comment upon the status of all prior broadband expansion grant projects, including the type of broadband technology used, the facility route actually built or installed, the number of residential and business customers actually connected, and other relevant details of the prior project(s).*
- *An applicant may also comment on broadband construction projects undertaken in prior years that were not funded in part by the Broadband Expansion Grant program.*

Wittenberg Wireless/Cirrinity has distinguished itself as both a provider, and as a manager of fiber-based broadband networks. It is the successful recipient of 7 other Wisconsin Broadband Expansion Grants letter of support from some customers who benefitted from these well managed projects.

Wittenberg Wireless/Cirrinity LLC purchased the City of Antigo's broadband utility in 2010 and has successfully operated it since that time. It currently has over 2500 FTTH and wireless subscribers in that area. It's major engineering projects as owner and operator of the broadband utility now include CoVantage Credit Union (one of the largest in the state), Antigo School District, the City of Antigo, Amron, Inc. (a maker of ammunition for the government) and many others.

Cirrinity proved itself adept at understanding local needs through its negotiations with the City of Antigo via a city referendum to allow sale of its broadband utility was passed handsomely by an 88% margin. Cirrinity also initiated a docket with the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin to insure all regulatory issues associated with its purchase would be in place. Ultimately, the broadband utility was acquired for a price of \$1.6 million. Cirrinity continues to operate it, today. Cirrinity has since built a widely distributed fiber network by which it offers both fiber-based business services within the City of Antigo and throughout Langlade County. Through its projects beyond its regulated service areas, and previous successes completing Wisconsin Broadband Expansion Grants, the company has proved it can create and manage successful customer growth.

Wittenberg Telephone Company has also completed a FTTH build over the past 3 years to all of our ILEC customers while also juggling the progressive expansion in other areas.

Our previous Grant Status's:

All previous Wittenberg Wireless Grants are completed on or ahead of schedule. The previous ARPA round grants are on track and construction will start as soon as the ground allows this spring.

Cirrinity Innovations LLC grant from FY 2020 is on track for a 2022 completion – delayed due to tower lease issues during the start of the COVID19 pandemic but still during the performance period of the grant.

- *A description of how the proposed project will or will not duplicate existing broadband infrastructure.*

This project does not duplicate existing broadband infrastructure.

The Wisconsin intent to see broadly deployed broadband at speeds of at least 25/3 Mbps and much higher, which cannot be achieved with the incumbent's existing equipment. The areas in this application do not currently have fiber communications infrastructure, and are unlikely to see it under any reasonable scenario in the coming five years. Similarly, there is no duplication of fiber infrastructure able to served CMRS and wireless Internet providers in the area. There is no comparison of the service quality of fiber and aging copper plant that would count as a duplication of infrastructure.

- *A description of an applicant's financial ability to undertake the proposed broadband construction project.*

Cirrinity has demonstrated its ability to undertake state broadband grants through seven earlier awards. This application comes as it and its parent, Wittenberg Telephone Company have experienced successful expansion in both their regulated and non-regulated endeavors. Each year Wittenberg Telephone and Wittenberg Wireless/Cirrinity submits its PSCW Annual Questionnaire in which it describes its revenues in both areas.

- *A description of how the proposed project will affect the ability of individuals to access health care service from home, including any impact upon the costs of those services*

In any sparsely populated area, the introduction of fiber infrastructure enables much faster and more reliable access to healthcare services and providers. Remote diagnostic medicine and health maintenance services from pediatric to geriatric purposes become possible with simple laptop cameras and attached devices that are becoming commonly available. The costs of travel and ultimately health insurance can quickly decline just due to the availability of highspeed broadband services. These communities lack local healthcare services and providers. This application makes a big difference.

- *A description of how the proposed project will affect the ability of students to access educational opportunities from home.*

High speed broadband access for the purposes of research and completing homework at home become possibilities if this application is accepted. As schools depend more and more on interactive distance learning and Internet access in real-time, the availability of high-speed broadband to students and those seeking vocational training will now be unencumbered by connection speed. Home schooling and summer classes, previously unworkable without high-speed broadband connection, now become a time-saving and travel-saving opportunity for children and teens. As mentioned above, the Marathon County Economic Development staff is emblematic of the demand for locally-accessed vocational training. Travel to UW-Extension two-year campuses can be difficult for those in rural Wisconsin settings. The ability to participate in online learning, and to work around interruptions of local employment and family life are an important adjunct to fiber broadband connectivity. Providing this connectivity significantly improves the return of this grant as an investment in Wisconsin's workforce.

- *A description of actions taken by a city, village, town, or county in support of the grant application that have not been discussed in the context of a public-private partnership above, including but not limited to:*

There are several ways where Marathon County and the Towns of Reid have given their time and support as a spur to rapid and successful completion of this project. To get to the point of us collaborating to work together and be successful, there has been several planning meetings and phone calls on personal time and without the hard work of each of our public-private partners this application wouldn't happen.

2/3/22

To whom it may concern

The slowness of our internet has affected our family in many ways. The most we can get from Frontier is 1MB. Our children in school have problems and frustration with that speed and it takes them a lot longer to get any work done.

Since COVID, my wife and I have both been having to work from home. Our internet speed is not fast enough for most of our work. We have to pay extra out of pocket for cell phone hot spot to get 3MB. There has been times we have had to drive into town to upload things for our job.

This has been a draw on our finance and significant frustration. We need faster internet. We are willing to contribute \$25.00 to help make this happen.

Troy + Keri Henrick  
216131 Lyon Lane Hotley WI

**From:** Jeff Pawlowski <jpaws6788@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 12, 2022 3:52 PM  
**To:** snyman@cirrinity.net  
**Subject:** Town Of Reid Meeting 1-11-22  
**Attachments:** mom.jpg

Scott:

I first want to Thank you for attending the monthly Town of Reid meeting and sharing with us the Plans for Cirrinity and laying fiber optic cable to all of the residents in the Pike Lake/Town of Reid area.

I will share why it is so important to me, my sister and my 94 yr old mother. My mother Florence is 94 and lives alone, she gets around on her own and other than some dementia is living in her own house alone where she has resided for 70 yrs ( also was her grandmothers homestead) which means a lot to her.

I am her primary care giver and for her safety I have installed 6 "granny cams" Wyze and Netvue these monitor the smoke alarms, carbon dioxide sensors, along with motion and sound detectors, they are set up for 2 way audio and live stream video monitoring, My sister Dawn lives in Wausau and between the 2 of us we feel these cams have been a game changer in our mother being able to stay in her own home.

The problem is that our up load and down load speed is extremely slow and streaming will run for 5 seconds then stop for 15 seconds then start up again. So there is no live streaming, and many times will error out.

Because of the slow upload and download speed ( **download runs between 3.1 Mb/s to 4.7 MB/s ) depends on the time of day ( upload can run from 288 to 594kb/s)**

During the lockdown my wife was told she could work from home but once our download/upload speed was looked at she had no choice but to go in and work from the office rather than remotely.

Everything is going paperless and documents need to be sent via email, many time we can only attach 1-2 documents or they will just not send.

I have talked to Frontier I have been told repeatedly that the reason service is getting worse/slowing down is that Frontier keeps add more people to the line and it slows everyone down more and more.

(My mother and I live **on Shady Lane West**) as does 3 others that attend the meeting last evening)

I tried to get some commitment from the Town of Reid Board on their support but didn't get any commitments.

I think if you took a survey you would find the vast majority would support it. ( of course there are a few that don't own computers)

If there is anything I can do to help, please let me know.

The high speed connection is not all about streaming movies or games...It's about safety, peoples lives learning, communication, banking and so on...

The rural areas have been left behind and I think this is a great opportunity for us to catch up a little.

Please keep me posted as you move along.

Regards

Jeff Pawlowski

( attached a photo of my mom)

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows





# WITTENBERG-BIRNAMWOOD School District

400 West Grand Avenue, Wittenberg, WI 54499

**Garrett Rogowski, District Superintendent**  
715-253-2213 (phone) 715-253-3588 (fax)  
[www.wittbirn.k12.wi.us](http://www.wittbirn.k12.wi.us)

March 7, 2022

Ms. Kristy Nieto  
Division Administrator  
Public Service Commission of Wisconsin  
4822 Madison Yards Way  
P.O. Box 7854  
Madison, WI 53705-9100

**Subject: Marathon County/Cirrinity Project**

Dear Public Service Commission of Wisconsin,

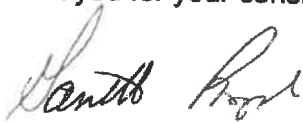
The Wittenberg Birnamwood School District would like to formally announce its support for the "Marathon County/Cirrinity" project to increase District students' ability to access educational resources, learn successfully remotely, and support the general improvement of the community through increased broadband capacity.

All levels of our educational system stand to gain from this project as broadband can overcome geographical and financial barriers to provide a wide range of educational and cultural opportunities. For residential internet service, broadband makes it possible for students to attend their virtual classes and complete assignments at home – something that many students cannot currently do, even more so with the current COVID-19 pandemic. Being unable to attend online classes and complete assignments at home creates a burden on students as they must find other means of internet provision, including traveling to the public library, a local McDonalds, or friends house which can take a great deal of time and money. Beyond virtual learning and homework, with quality residential internet service, students can easily access information and learn about their community and the world. They can also learn about secondary education options, research job opportunities, and communicate with others.

The Marathon County/Cirrinity Project provides a unique opportunity for households in rural Marathon County to access reliable, high quality, fiber broadband service. With this project, District students would have access to consistent high speed internet service that would enable them to easily participate in synchronous education, attend large webinars, even when siblings and other household members are also accessing the internet.

As the Wittenberg Birnamwood School District, we fully support this grant application and will fully assist in the completion of the project goal. If you have further questions, please don't hesitate to contact the District at 715-253-2213.

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Garrett Rogowski". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Garrett" being more prominent than the last name "Rogowski".

Garrett Rogowski  
District Administrator



March 16, 2022

Ms. Kristy Nieto  
Division Administrator  
Public Service Commission of Wisconsin  
4822 Madison Yards Way  
P.O. Box 7854  
Madison, WI 53705-9100

Dear Public Service Commission of Wisconsin,

Marathon County Government would like to formally announce its support for the Marathon County/Cirrinity project to aid in the economic growth of Marathon County and support the general improvement of our communities through increased broadband capacity.

Broadband expansion is a key component to long-term economic growth for Marathon County. The availability of adequate, reliable, and affordable internet service will inevitably retain and attract both residents and talent, increase employment opportunities, and expand economic activity. Our ability to attract and retain residents is critical in not only maintaining our tax base but growing it. Furthermore, this provides the means for Marathon County to deliver a wide range of services to our residents, including the ability for our local emergency responders to leverage technology, improving the efficiency and access of our 911 system.

This project will also improve our residents' quality of life, allowing them to carry out daily tasks more efficiently, work from home, attend school virtually, and access telehealth services. Expanded broadband access will ultimately revitalize Marathon County and posture it to compete with larger cities for investment and innovation.

The Marathon County/Cirrinity project provides a unique opportunity for 368 households and businesses in Reid and Bevent to access reliable, high-quality fiber broadband service. Marathon County Government fully supports this grant application and will fully assist in the completion of the project goal through expedited permitting. **Furthermore, we will support this project with a financial match of \$70,000 if grant funding is awarded.**

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please feel free to contact me at [kurt.gibbs@co.marathon.wi.us](mailto:kurt.gibbs@co.marathon.wi.us) or (715) 261-1409. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kurt Gibbs  
Chair, Marathon County Board of Supervisors

## **RESOLUTION #R-21 -22**

### **AUTHORIZATION OF COUNTY SUPPORT FOR PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION (PSC) BROADBAND GRANTS**

**WHEREAS**, broadband access is essential for economic development, virtual and lifetime learning, rural prosperity, and telehealth health services in Marathon County; and

**WHEREAS**, Marathon County has recognized the importance of broadband access in ensuring the health, safety and economic prosperity for all residents; and

**WHEREAS**, a significant portion of the county is currently “unserved” and “underserved” in terms of access to reliable and adequate broadband services; and

**WHEREAS**, the County has recognized the need to play a role in enhancing broadband access to its residents based on the findings and work done in association with the 2009 Broadband Gap Analysis, the 2015 Broadband Connectivity Task Force Report, and the 2019 Broadband Assessment and Plan prepared by Design Nine; and

**WHEREAS**, based on meetings and discussions with Internet Service Providers and evaluating the recommendations of Design Nine the County Board created a Broadband Task Force and charged it with identifying strategies, partners and potential funding sources that will support the expansion of broadband services to underserved areas; and

**WHEREAS**, the State of Wisconsin has existing opportunities to expand broadband services through a Broadband Expansion Grant Program administered by the Wisconsin Public Service Commission (PSC); and

**WHEREAS**, to assist PSC grant applicants, the Marathon County Broadband Task Force has recommended a policy of providing forgivable loans to PSC grant applicants whose proposed use of grant funds will benefit Marathon County. These forgivable loans would be in the amount of \$235 per unit for each applicant. Each loan would be forgiven upon activation of the broadband system within Marathon County created, expanded, or updated by grant funds. These loans would be provided based upon the applications and materials submitted and considered at the Marathon County Broadband Task Force meeting of February 28, 2022; and

**WHEREAS**, to further assist PSC grant applicants, the Marathon County Broadband Task Force has recommended a policy of making low interest loans available to PSC grant applicants whose expenditures will exceed \$235 per unit and whose proposed use of grant funds will benefit Marathon County. These loans would be for the non-PSC and non-county share of these projects; and

**WHEREAS**, these recommended loans would be available to applicants through American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, an allowable use of funds pursuant to ARPA expenditure categories 5.16 and 5.17 and Section 602(c)(1)(D) of the Social Security Act as amended.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Marathon County Human Resources, Finance, and Property Committee and the Marathon County Executive Committee authorize appropriate county officials to act under this resolution to convey County support for and commit County resources to broadband service expansion applications that satisfy the criteria established by the Marathon County Broadband Task Force. County officials are also authorized to work with and support grant applicants through suitable means they have determined to be most advantageous to the interests of Marathon County within the constraints of the Budget approved by the County Board.

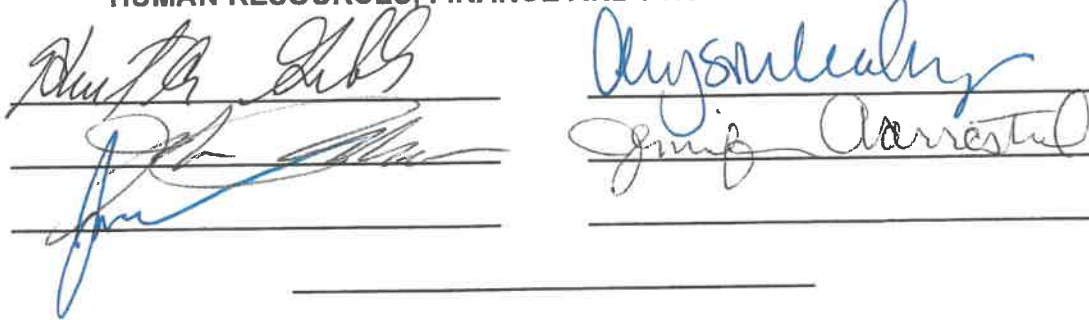
**NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Marathon County Human Resources, Finance, and Property Committee, the Marathon County Executive Committee, and the Marathon County Board authorize county officials to provide forgivable loans in the amount of \$235 per unit to PSC grant applicants whose proposed use of grant funds will benefit Marathon County and as further defined in the applications and materials submitted and considered at the Marathon County Broadband Task Force meeting of February 28, 2022. The forgivable loan would not exceed \$70,000 for Cirrinity, \$142,175 for Bug Tussel Wireless and \$944,835 for Frontier for a total not to exceed \$1,157,010. The forgivable loans will only be made upon a successful award from the PSC.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Marathon County Human Resources, Finance, and Property Committee, the Marathon County Executive Committee, and the Marathon County Board authorize county officials to make available low interest loans available to PSC grant applicants whose proposed use of grant funds will benefit Marathon County for the non-PSC and non-county share of these projects under the terms and conditions as defined by the Marathon County Broadband Task Force.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that these recommended loans are authorized through American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, an allowable use of funds pursuant to ARPA expenditure categories 5.16 and 5.17 and Section 602(c)(1)(D) of the Social Security Act as amended.

March 15, 2022

**HUMAN RESOURCES, FINANCE AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE**

Three handwritten signatures in blue ink are written over three horizontal lines. The first signature is on the left, the second is in the middle, and the third is on the right. The signature on the right appears to be "Jim Carstedt".

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

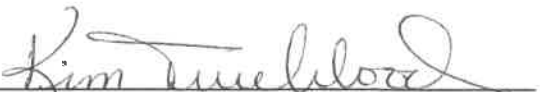
Three handwritten signatures in blue ink are written over three horizontal lines. The first signature is on the left, the second is in the middle, and the third is on the right.

**Fiscal Impact:** This resolution would have no immediate fiscal impact; however, it would authorize county officials to utilize American Rescue Plan Act funding to authorize per unit loans to PSC grant applicants whose projects benefit Marathon County. Provisions of loans under this resolution would have an impact on ARPA funds dependent on the number of applicants and the amounts approved.

STATE OF WISCONSIN )  
 )SS.  
COUNTY OF MARATHON )

I, Kim Trueblood, County Clerk in and for Marathon County, Wisconsin, hereby certify that the attached Resolution #R-21-22 was enacted by the Marathon County Board of Supervisors at the Adjourned Annual Meeting which was held on March 15, 2022.

SEAL

  
Kim Trueblood  
Marathon County Clerk



March 7, 2022

Ms. Kristy Nieto

Division Administrator

Public Service Commission of Wisconsin

4822 Madison Yards Way

P.O. Box 7854

Madison, WI 53705-9100

**Subject: Letter of Support for the Marathon County/Cirrinity Project**

Ms. Nieto,

I am writing in support of the proposed Marathon County/Cirrinity project.

There are many benefits of having fast, reliable, and affordable internet service in our community related to quality of life and economic vitality. While the list of benefits is quite lengthy, I've highlighted a few key reasons why this expanded access is critical to the rural areas of Marathon County below.

First, the health of the community can be greatly increased with improved internet service. Through the internet, patients can have greater access to their health information and increased convenience in gaining prescriptions and supplies that they need. Additionally, telehealth is becoming a method of gaining healthcare and is a fantastic resource where traveling to appointments may be difficult. However, telehealth requires significant bandwidth, low latency, and symmetrical download and upload speeds.

Second, quality internet service can also have widespread impacts on our educational system. Reliable broadband makes it possible for students to attend virtual classes and

complete assignments at home - something many students in Marathon County cannot currently do. Being unable to attend online classes and complete assignments at home creates a burden on students as they must find other means of accessing reliable internet service, which can take a great deal of time, money, and health exposure. Beyond virtual learning and homework, students with quality residential internet service would be able to access information and learn about their community and the world, secondary education options, research job opportunities, and communicate with others.

Third, as we continue to experience an ongoing workforce shortage, businesses have put a high emphasis on worker retention and development. Quality internet service provides existing employees with the ability to work remotely and access quality professional development opportunities. As we fill positions, we find that individuals are often drawn to the scenic beauty and rural setting of Marathon County. Unfortunately, we lose talent as prospective employees find that housing options are limited to where high speed internet infrastructure is located.

The Marathon County/Cirrinity project is a unique opportunity for some of the more rural areas of Marathon County to have access to high quality, reliable internet service. As you've read above, the impact is extensive, touching nearly every industry in Marathon County in some manner. With this project, residents would have access to tele-health services, students can attend virtual classes and complete assignments at home, businesses can provide their employees with the added flexibility of working remotely, and the list continues.

As the executive director of United Way of Marathon County I fully support this grant application and will fully assist in the completion of the project goal. If you have any questions or would like additional information, please feel free to reach me at (715) 298-5701 or at [jsargent@unitedwaymc.org](mailto:jsargent@unitedwaymc.org). Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,



Jeff Sargent, Executive Director/CEO



March 5, 2022

Ms. Kristy Nieto  
Division Administrator  
Public Service Commission of Wisconsin  
4822 Madison Yards Way  
P.O. Box 7854  
Madison, WI 53705-9100

**Subject: Letter of Support for the Marathon County/Cirrinity Project**

Ms. Nieto,

I am writing in support of the proposed Marathon County/Cirrinity project.

There are many benefits of having fast, reliable, and affordable internet service in our community related to quality of life and economic vitality. While the list of benefits is quite lengthy, I have highlighted a few key reasons why this expanded access is critical to the rural areas of Marathon County below.

First, the health of the community can be greatly increased with improved internet service. Through the internet, patients can have greater access to their health information and increased convenience in gaining prescriptions and supplies that they need. Additionally, telehealth is becoming a method of gaining healthcare and is a fantastic resource where traveling to appointments may be difficult. However, telehealth requires significant bandwidth, low latency, and symmetrical download and upload speeds.

Second, quality internet service can also have widespread impacts on our educational system. Reliable broadband makes it possible for students to attend virtual classes and complete assignments at home - something many students in Marathon County cannot currently do. Being unable to attend online classes and complete assignments at home creates a burden on students as they must find other means of accessing reliable internet service, which can take a great deal of time, money, and health exposure. Beyond virtual learning and homework, students with quality residential internet service would be able to access information and learn about their community and the world, secondary education options, research job opportunities, and communicate with others.

Third, as we continue to experience an ongoing workforce shortage, businesses have put a high emphasis on worker retention and development. Quality internet service provides existing employees with the ability to work remotely and access quality professional development opportunities. As we fill positions, we find that individuals are often drawn to the scenic beauty and rural setting of Marathon County. Unfortunately, we lose talent as prospective employees find that housing options are limited to where high speed internet infrastructure is located.



The Marathon County/Cirrinity project is a unique opportunity for some of the more rural areas of Marathon County to have access to high quality, reliable internet service. As you have read above, the impact is extensive, touching nearly every industry in Marathon County in some manner. With this project, residents would have access to tele-health services, students can attend virtual classes and complete assignments at home, businesses can provide their employees with the added flexibility of working remotely, and the list continues.

As the President and CEO of the Greater Wausau Chamber of Commerce, I fully support this grant application and will fully assist in the completion of the project goal. If you have any questions or would like additional information, please feel free to reach me at 715-848-5946 or at [deckmann@wausauchamber.com](mailto:deckmann@wausauchamber.com). Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Eckmann".

David Eckmann

President and CEO

Greater Wausau Chamber of Commerce



2200 Westwood Drive, PO Box 1395, Wausau, WI 54401  
715.847.2118 | 800.283.2881 | aspirus.org

March 7, 2022

Ms. Kristy Nieto  
Division Administrator  
Public Service Commission of Wisconsin  
4822 Madison Yards Way  
P.O. Box 7854  
Madison, WI 53705-9100

**Subject: Letter of Support for the Marathon County/Cirrinity Project**

Ms. Nieto,

On behalf of Aspirus Inc., I write today to express support for the proposed Marathon County/Cirrinity Project.

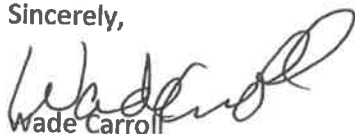
The health of our community can be greatly increased with improved internet service. Through the internet, patients are able to have greater access to their health information and increased convenience in gaining the health supplies that they need. For example, patients can go online to view their health records, order prescriptions, and view their insurance policies. Patients are also able to research tips for a healthy lifestyle and access exercise classes – these are all part of preventative care.

Adequate broadband internet is also a necessity for those seeking to better utilize telehealth. Telemedicine is changing the way patients in Marathon County, and throughout the state manage their healthcare needs. The benefits of telehealth can only be utilized with reliable high-speed internet access – yet, many in Marathon County do not have adequate, reliable, or affordable service.

As we continue to rely heavily on telemedicine to support the evolving needs of patients, expanding broadband connectivity will help to ensure Aspirus Inc. can continue operating in an effective manner. If patients do not have quality internet service, they are not able to access their health information, receive tele-health services, or stay up-to-date on events and other happenings. Because of this, it is imperative that all Marathon County residents have fast, reliable, and affordable residential internet service. This is why we offer our strong support for the Marathon County/Cirrinity Project.

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please feel free to reach me at 715-847-2537 or at [wade.carroll@aspirus.org](mailto:wade.carroll@aspirus.org). Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Wade Carroll

VP, Information Technology  
Aspirus Inc.



March 11, 2022

Ms. Kristy Nieto  
Division Administrator  
Public Service Commission of Wisconsin  
4822 Madison Yards Way  
P.O. Box 7854  
Madison, WI 53705-9100

**Subject: Letter of Support for the Marathon County/Cirrinity Project**

Ms. Nieto,

I am writing on behalf of the Marathon Planning Metropolitan Planning Commission to express our support for the proposed Marathon County/Cirrinity broadband expansion project in the and Towns of Reid and Bevent. Our organization represents 13 local units of government in the greater Wausau area and understands that there are many benefits of having fast, reliable, and affordable internet service in our community related to quality of life and economic vitality. While the list of benefits is quite lengthy, I've highlighted a few key reasons why this expanded access is critical to the rural areas of Marathon County currently unserved or underserved below.

First, the health of the community can be greatly increased with improved internet service. Through the internet, patients can have greater access to their health information and increased convenience in gaining prescriptions and supplies that they need. Additionally, telehealth is becoming a method of gaining healthcare and is a fantastic resource where traveling to appointments may be difficult. However, telehealth requires significant bandwidth, low latency, and symmetrical download and upload speeds.

Second, quality internet service can also have widespread impacts on our educational system. Reliable broadband makes it possible for students to attend virtual classes and complete assignments at home - something many students in Marathon County cannot currently do. Being unable to attend online classes and complete assignments at home creates a burden on students as they must find other means of accessing reliable internet service, which can take a great deal of time, money, and health exposure. Beyond virtual learning and homework, students with quality residential internet service would be able to access information and learn about their community and the world, secondary education options, research job opportunities, and communicate with others.

Third, as we continue to experience an ongoing workforce shortage, businesses have put a high emphasis on worker retention and development. Quality internet service provides existing employees with the ability to work remotely and access quality professional development opportunities. As we fill positions, we find that individuals are often drawn to the scenic beauty and rural setting of Marathon County. Unfortunately, we lose talent as prospective employees find that housing options are limited to where high speed internet infrastructure is located.



Finally, access to adequate broadband service is critical in our efforts to keep the public engaged and informed of what is taking place in local government. It provides them an opportunity to access meeting agendas, minutes and watch many of the meetings that are live streamed on our web sites.

The Marathon County/Cirrinity project is an opportunity for some of the rural areas of Marathon County to have access to high quality, reliable internet service. As you've read above, the impact is extensive, touching nearly every industry in Marathon County in some manner. With this project, residents would have access to tele-health services, students can attend virtual classes and complete assignments at home, businesses can provide their employees with the added flexibility of working remotely, and the list continues.

Wausau Area Metropolitan Planning Organization supports this grant application and will fully assist in the completion of the project goal.

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please feel free to reach me at 715 212-2227 or at [john.robinson@co.marathon.wi.us](mailto:john.robinson@co.marathon.wi.us). Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "John Robinson", written in dark ink.

John Robinson  
Chairperson  
Marathon County Metropolitan Planning Organization

cc Dave Mack, MPO Director



Main Office • 2327 W Veterans Pkwy • PO Box 988 • Marshfield, WI 54449-0988  
Regional Office • 70 South State St • Hixton, WI 54635

800-236-1041 • FAX 715-687-4126

March 8, 2022

Ms. Kristy Nieto  
Division Administrator  
Public Service Commission of Wisconsin  
4822 Madison Yards Way  
P.O. Box 7854  
Madison, WI 53705-9100

**Subject: Letter of Support for the Marathon County/Bug Tussel, Frontier, Cirrinity Broadband Project**

Ms. Nieto,

I am writing in support of the proposed Marathon County/Broadband Project. Agriculture's success and growth is dependent on reliable and affordable high speed internet service, as it allows farmers to follow commodity markets, communicate with customers and reach markets across the world. Additionally, precision agriculture, which can help reduce costs and increase efficiencies relies on the availability of broadband service and agricultural tourism, a growing market, relies on a strong digital presence.

ProVision Partners Cooperative of Wisconsin is an ag supply cooperative of feed/grain, agronomy, and energy products. We employ around 350 people. A good deal of our employees and patrons live and do business in rural areas of Wisconsin where local internet is a challenge.

Having fast, reliable, and affordable internet service in rural areas of Marathon County is directly related to business vitality.

As a company we have been fortunate to have access for most of our locations. However, we are limited on using necessary technology in the field with poor rural broadband. In addition, with the pandemic forcing some of our employees to be able to work remotely has been a challenge with extremely slow down and upload speeds. Virtual meetings and training are difficult and often not even possible. Our farmers that we serve also are facing these challenges with internet speeds which limits them from using a lot of today's technologies to advance their operations.

As our business who looks to recruit new employees to service rural areas, residential broadband service is an essential quality of life issue for retention and relocation. Without this vital piece of infrastructure, we will lose qualified young employees to other regions or other states.

If this project can bring better rural broadband to under served areas we will be able to offer more flexible working arrangements, offer new technologies to our agriculture customers, and our employees can use vital technology to better and more efficiently do their jobs.

Furthermore, high speed internet access is necessary for our children to have equal access to educational resources, employment opportunities, and for us to remain connected to friends and family. For these reasons, it is critical that Marathon County receives increased broadband service.

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please feel free to reach me at 800-236-1041 or at [rlarson@provisionpartners.coop](mailto:rlarson@provisionpartners.coop). Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rob Larson".

Rob Larson  
General Manager/CEO

Auburndale • Black River Falls • Chili • Colby • Fairchild • Hixton • Humbird  
Marshfield • Merrillan • Northfield • Pittsville • Stratford • Unity • Warrens • West Salem

[Provisionpartners.coop](http://Provisionpartners.coop)



# WAUSAU SCHOOL DISTRICT

Longfellow Administration Center

415 Seymour Street • P.O. Box 359 • Wausau, Wisconsin 54402-0359 • 715-261-0500 • [www.wausauschools.org](http://www.wausauschools.org)

*Dr. Keith W. Hiltz, Superintendent of Schools*

March 7, 2022

Ms. Kristy Nieto  
Division Administrator  
Public Service Commission of Wisconsin  
4822 Madison Yards Way  
P.O. Box 7854  
Madison, WI 53705-9100

**Subject: Marathon County/Cirrinity**

Dear Public Service Commission of Wisconsin,

The Wausau School District would like to formally announce its support for the "Marathon County/Cirrinity" project to increase District students' ability to access educational resources, learn successfully remotely, and support the general improvement of the community through increased broadband capacity.

All levels of our educational system stand to gain from this project as broadband can overcome geographical and financial barriers to provide a wide range of educational and cultural opportunities. For residential internet service, broadband makes it possible for students to attend their virtual classes and complete assignments at home – something that many students cannot currently do, even more so with the current COVID-19 pandemic. Being unable to attend online classes and complete assignments at home creates a burden on students as they must find other means of internet provision, including traveling to the public library, a local McDonalds, or friends house which can take a great deal of time and money. Beyond virtual learning and homework, with quality residential internet service, students can easily access information and learn about their community and the world. They can also learn about secondary education options, research job opportunities, and communicate with others.

The Marathon County/Cirrinity Project provides a unique opportunity for households in rural Marathon County to access reliable, high quality, fiber broadband service. With this project, District students would have access to consistent high speed internet service that would enable them to easily participate in synchronous education, attend large webinars, even when siblings and other household members are also accessing the internet.

As the Wausau School District, we fully support this grant application and will fully assist in the completion of the project goal. If you have further questions, please don't hesitate to contact the District at (715) 261-0505.

Thank you for your consideration,

Dr. Keith Hiltz  
Superintendent of Schools

**It is the mission of the Wausau School District to advance student learning, achievement, and success.**

March 09, 2022

Ms. Kristy Nieto  
Division Administrator  
Public Service Commission of Wisconsin  
4822 Madison Yards Way  
P.O. Box 7854  
Madison, WI 53705-9100

**Subject: Letter of Support for the Marathon County/Cirrinity Wireless Project**

Ms. Nieto,

I am writing in support of the proposed Marathon County **Cirrinity Wireless Project**. Agriculture's success and growth is dependent on reliable and affordable high speed internet service, as it allows farmers to follow commodity markets, communicate with customers and reach markets across the world. Additionally, precision agriculture, which can help reduce costs and increase efficiencies relies on the availability of broadband service and agricultural tourism, a growing market, relies on a strong digital presence.

*The Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation is the state's largest general farm organization representing farms of different sizes, commodities and management styles.*

***Marathon County Farm Bureau is a division of Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation. We work side by side with our Local, State and Nationwide members. We strive to be a voice for agriculture and Our Mission, "Empowering the Wisconsin agricultural community through our grassroots membership to preserve and promote the advancement of agriculture."***

Furthermore, high speed internet access is necessary for our children to have equal access to educational resources, employment opportunities, and for us to remain connected to friends and family. For these reasons, it is critical that Marathon County receives increased broadband service.

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please feel free to reach me at 715.348.0677 or at mueller675@yahoo.com. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

**William Mueller  
Marathon County President  
Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation**



## MARATHON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

500 FOREST STREET WAUSAU, WI 54403-5568

**SCOTT R. PARKS**  
**SHERIFF**

NON-EMERGENCY

(715) 261-1200

FAX (715) 261-1221

[www.marathoncountysheriff.org](http://www.marathoncountysheriff.org)

March 8, 2022

Ms. Kristy Nieto  
Division Administrator  
Public Service Commission of Wisconsin  
4822 Madison Yards Way  
P.O. Box 7854  
Madison, WI 53705-9100

Dear Ms. Kristy Nieto,

This letter is in support of the Broadband Infrastructure Application submitted by Marathon County.

The Marathon County Sheriff's Office is committed to the persons living, working and visiting Marathon County through public safety management, trust building and assisting all levels of government maintaining this community. Technology is a major component of conducting this mission effectively. If individuals cannot connect with us, everyone loses and the trust established diminishes with each negative effort at interaction.

Technology has become a means of life no matter the age group of those we serve. Granted some are more familiar with technology than others within our County. Knowing more youthful individuals depend on using technology to connect rather than the more traditional means of telephoning, we have improved access to our 911 Center by upgrading our systems to accept text messages and shared photographs. This has worked well for us where there is solid connectivity, but there are many areas of our County especially in the more rural areas where connectivity access is minimal to poor to non-existent. This needs to change for the benefit of all.

Our local emergency responders in law enforcement, fire and EMS experience the same lack of connectivity. Many times our law enforcement professionals have to seek identified hot spots, sometimes needing to leave their assigned patrol areas, to gain access back to our Office to submit intelligence, reports and other data. This results in frequent visits to regular locations providing a developed pattern which could cause individuals with criminal intent to target the professionals using those identified hot spots. Broader access does not necessarily eliminate this problem but it does assist in lessening it.

I am requesting you consider and award this grant to Marathon County. If you have any questions or would like additional information, please feel free to reach me at 715-261-1205 and/or my direct email [scott.parks@co.marathon.wi.us](mailto:scott.parks@co.marathon.wi.us).

Sincerely,

Scott R. Parks  
Marathon County Sheriff



## D.C. Everest Area School District

1699 Schofield Ave., Suite 300  
Schofield, WI 54476  
Phone 715-359-4221  
[www.dce.k12.wi.us](http://www.dce.k12.wi.us)

Kristine A. Gilmore, Ed.D.  
Superintendent

### MISSION STATEMENT

D.C. Everest Area School District, in partnership with the community, is committed to being an innovative educational leader in developing knowledgeable, productive, caring, creative, responsible individuals prepared to meet the challenges of an ever-changing global society.

March 7, 2022

Ms. Kristy Nieto  
Division Administrator  
Public Service Commission of Wisconsin  
4822 Madison Yards Way  
P.O. Box 7854  
Madison, WI 53705-9100

### Subject: Marathon County Cirrinity Project

Dear Public Service Commission of Wisconsin,


The D.C. Everest Area School District would like to formally announce its support for the "Marathon County Cirrinity" project to increase District students' ability to access educational resources, learn successfully remotely, and support the general improvement of the community through increased broadband capacity.

All levels of our educational system stand to gain from this project as broadband can overcome geographical and financial barriers to provide a wide range of educational and cultural opportunities. For residential internet service, broadband makes it possible for students to attend virtual classes and complete assignments at home – something that many rural students cannot currently do, even more so during the COVID-19 pandemic. Being unable to attend online classes and complete assignments at home creates a burden on students as they must find other means of internet access, including traveling to the public library, a local McDonalds or Starbucks, or friend's house which can take a great deal of time and money. Beyond virtual learning and homework, with quality residential internet service, students can easily access information and learn about their community and the world. They can also learn about secondary education options, research job opportunities, and communicate with others.

The Marathon County Cirrinity Project provides a unique opportunity for households in rural Marathon County to access reliable, high quality, fiber broadband service. With this project, District students would have access to consistent high-speed internet service that would enable them to easily participate in synchronous education, attend large webinars, or take online classes even when siblings and other household members are also accessing the internet.

As the D.C. Everest Area School District, we fully support this grant application and will fully assist in the completion of the project goal. If you have further questions, please don't hesitate to contact the District at 715-359-4221.

Thank you for your consideration,



Kristine A. Gilmore, Ed.D.  
Superintendent

KG:es





# WAUSAU SCHOOL DISTRICT

## Longfellow Administration Center

5 Seymour Street • P.O. Box 359 • Wausau, WI 54402-0359 • 715-261-0500 • Fax 715-261-2503 • [www.wausauschools.org](http://www.wausauschools.org)

*Dr. Keith Hilts, Superintendent of Schools*

March 10, 2022

Ms. Kristy Nieto

Division Administrator

Public Service Commission of Wisconsin

4822 Madison Yards Way

P.O. Box 7854

Madison, WI 53705-9100

**Subject: Marathon County/Cirrinity Project**

Dear Public Service Commission of Wisconsin,

The Wausau School District would like to formally announce its support for the Marathon County/Cirrinity project to increase District students' ability to access educational resources, learn successfully remotely, and support the general improvement of the community through increased broadband capacity.

All levels of our educational system stand to gain from this project as broadband can overcome geographical and financial barriers to provide a wide range of educational and cultural opportunities. For residential internet service, broadband makes it possible for students to attend their virtual classes and complete assignments at home – something that many students cannot currently do, even more so with the current COVID-19 pandemic. Being unable to attend online classes and complete assignments at home creates a burden on students as they must find other means of internet provision, including traveling to the public library, a local McDonalds, or friends house which can take a great deal of time and money. Beyond virtual learning and homework, with quality residential internet service, students can easily access information and learn about their community and the world. They can also learn about secondary education options, research job opportunities, and communicate with others.

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As the Wausau School District, we fully support this grant application and will fully assist in the completion of the project goal. If you have further questions, please don't hesitate to contact the District at Jon Euting, Director of Technology and Media Services at [jeuting@wausauschools.org](mailto:jeuting@wausauschools.org).

Thank you for your consideration,

Sincerely,

Jon Euting

Director of Technology  
Wausau School District



It is the mission of the Wausau School District to advance student learning, achievement, and success.